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DD/S 70-2227

3 JUN 1970

OGC HAS REVIEWED.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT : GAO Survey of Refugee Programs in Vietnam
and Laos

1. This memorandum is for your information only.
2. In connection with hearings chaired by Senator Kennedy concerning refugee matters, the General Accounting Office was requested to look into related U. S. Government programs and activities in Laos and report back by the middle of June 1970. GAO planned to send a team from their Honolulu Office to the Far East and to initiate inquiries at the Washington level with GAO Headquarters personnel, with the likelihood that one of the latter would subsequently travel to Laos.
3. The FE Division has been involved in inter-Agency discussions which included representatives of the Departments of State and Defense and AID. GAO additionally contacted the Agency directly on 11 May 1970 with regard to Air America involvement in refugee programs through contracts with U. S. Government organizations.
4. The GAO direct inquiry concerning Air America coincided with a request for guidance from Chief of Station, Vientiane. Following consultation with FE, instructions were sent to Vientiane that all GAO inquiries which impinged on Agency interests should be referred to Washington for handling. Responsible GAO Headquarters officers were informed of this action but were told that this should not be interpreted as a refusal by CIA to provide any information. We have just learned that the GAO team has not departed for Laos and with a mid-June deadline for the GAO report to be completed, it seems highly improbable that a GAO field trip will be made.

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5. In the last few days AID has pressed FE for concurrence in the release of information contained in AID files to the GAO auditors, including certain papers which contain CIA related data. Our concerns are that Agency funded payments and supplies to the Meo troops and their dependents may be erroneously identified as being paid from AID appropriated funds. Additionally, names of Agency officers and Meo order of battle information are revealed in these files.

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6. This subject was discussed with [REDACTED] Mr. Maury,

[REDACTED] It was agreed that we will approach GAO directly for their agreement that the Agency be consulted before any CIA related information is released to the Kennedy Committee. After obtaining this understanding we will then advise AID to release the pertinent papers to the GAO audit team. We will also ask GAO not to report names of CIA officers contained in the correspondence.

7. We will advise you of further developments.

SIGNED R. L. BANNERMAN

R. L. Bannerman
Deputy Director
for Support

cc: Chief, FE
General Counsel
Legislative Counsel

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